

REMARKS

The applicants' attorneys appreciate the Examiner's thorough search and remarks.

Responsive to the objection set forth against the Figures, the specification has been corrected as suggested by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

A minor spelling error in the specification has also been corrected. No new matter is added.

Claims 11-17 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1 and 7 have been rejected as anticipated by Onishi et al. (Onishi), U.S. Patent No. 6,611,021. Reconsideration is requested.

Both claims 1 and 7 call for forming only a first epitaxial layer and only a second epitaxial layer, "wherein said first epitaxial semiconductor layer and said second epitaxial semiconductor layer together form a single epitaxial layer, and wherein said pedestals are formed near a control region of said single epitaxial layer spaced from said support body".

In a device according to the present invention, the pedestals do not reach to the substrate; i.e. the "support body" on which the epitaxial layers are formed. Rather, the pedestals are spaced from the substrate. Thus, a significant portion of epitaxial layer is not occupied by the pedestals.

On the other hand, Onishi teaches columns 38b which extend all the way down to the substrate 11. Indeed, Onishi refers to columns 38b as "partition" regions, which partition the drift layer 38. As a result, a significant amount of the epitaxial layer is consumed, which increases the Rdson of the device per unit area.

On the other hand, if pedestals are spaced from the substrate as called for by claims 1 and 7, a significant portion of the drift region may remain unoccupied by the pedestals, which compared to the device shown by Onishi, may exhibit improved Rdson per unit area.

Furthermore, Onishi does not teach multiple (more than two) epitaxial semiconductor layers.

In addition, Onishi does not teach positioning the pedestals near a central region of the single epitaxial layer. Rather Onishi teaches forming a column which extends from the top of the drift region to the substrate.

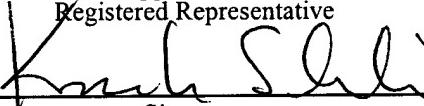
Claims 1 and 7 should be deemed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above.
Reconsideration is, therefore, requested.

The remaining claims are dependent claims, which should be deemed allowable if their base claims, namely, claims 1 and 7, are allowed. Reconsideration is requested.

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly solicited.

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Name of applicant, assignee or
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Signature

October 8, 2004

Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,



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